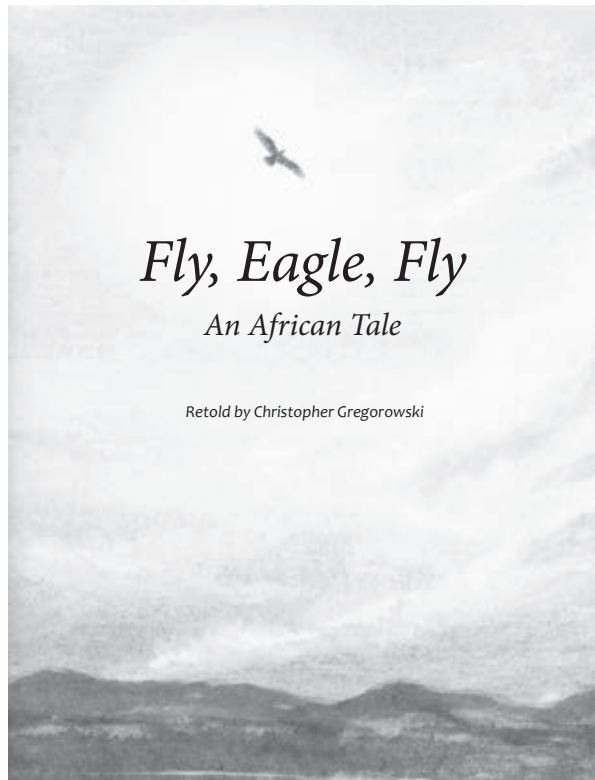


## Appendix B: Reading Passages and Items



A farmer went out one day to search for a lost calf. The herders had returned without it the evening before. And that night there had been a terrible storm.

He went to the valley and searched by the riverbed, among the reeds, behind the rocks and in the rushing water.

He climbed the slopes of the high mountain with its rocky cliffs. He looked behind a large rock in case the calf had huddled there to escape the storm. And that was where he stopped. There, on a ledge of rock, was a most unusual sight. An eagle chick had hatched from its egg a day or two earlier, and had been blown from its nest by the terrible storm.

He reached out and cradled the chick in both hands. He would take it home and care for it.

He was almost home when the children ran out to meet him.

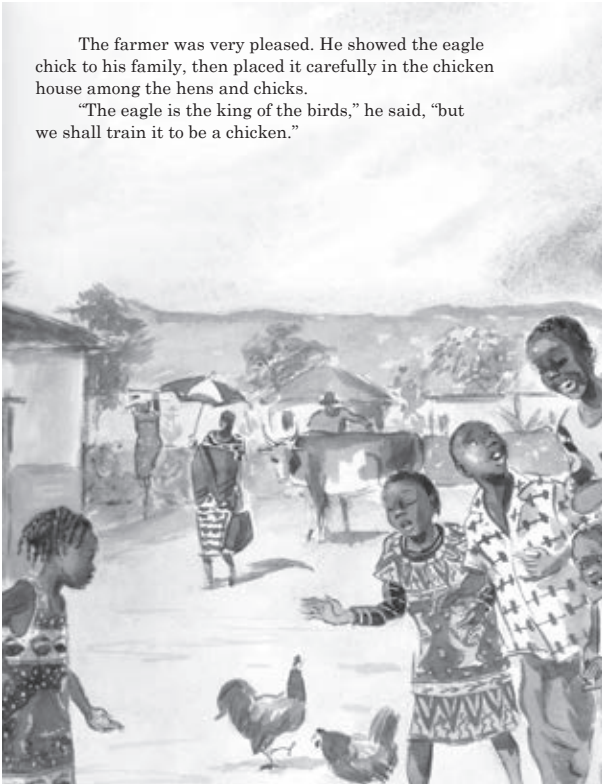
"The calf came back by itself!" they shouted.



Reading passage continued on the next page.

The farmer was very pleased. He showed the eagle chick to his family, then placed it carefully in the chicken house among the hens and chicks.

"The eagle is the king of the birds," he said, "but we shall train it to be a chicken."



So, the eagle lived among the chickens, learning their ways. As it grew, it began to look quite different from any chicken they had ever seen.

One day a friend dropped in for a visit. The friend saw the bird among the chickens.

"Hey! That is not a chicken. It's an eagle!"

The farmer smiled at him and said, "Of course it's a chicken. Look—it walks like a chicken, it eats like a chicken. It thinks like a chicken. Of course it's a chicken."

But the friend was not convinced. "I will show you that it is an eagle," he said.

The farmer's children helped his friend catch the bird. It was fairly heavy, but the farmer's friend lifted it above his head and said, "You are not a chicken but an eagle. You belong not to the earth but to the sky. Fly, Eagle, fly!"

The bird stretched out its wings, looked about, saw the chickens feeding, and jumped down to scratch with them for food.

"I told you it was a chicken," the farmer said, and he roared with laughter.



Reading passage continued on the next page.

Very early the next morning the farmer's dogs began to bark. A voice was calling outside in the darkness. The farmer ran to the door. It was his friend again. "Give me another chance with the bird," he begged. "Do you know the time? It is long before dawn."

"Come with me. Fetch the bird."

Reluctantly, the farmer picked up the bird, which was fast asleep among the chickens. The two men set off, disappearing into the darkness.

"Where are we going?" asked the farmer sleepily.

"To the mountains where you found the bird."

"And why at this ridiculous time of the night?"

"So that our eagle may see the sun rise over the mountain and follow it into the sky where it belongs."

They went into the valley and crossed the river, the friend leading the way. "Hurry," he said, "for the dawn will arrive before we do."

The first light crept into the sky as they began to climb the mountain. The wispy clouds in the sky were pink at first, and then began to shimmer with a golden brilliance. Sometimes their path was dangerous as it clung to the side of the mountain, crossing narrow shelves of rock and taking them into dark crevices and out again. At last he said, "This will do." He looked down the cliff and saw the ground thousands of feet below. They were very near the top.

Carefully, the friend carried the bird onto a ledge. He set it down so that it looked toward the east, and began talking to it. The farmer chuckled. "It talks only chicken-talk."

But the friend talked on, telling the bird about the sun, how it gives life to the world, and how it reigns in the heavens, giving light to each new day. "Look at the sun, Eagle. And when it rises, rise with it. You belong to the sky, not to the earth." At that moment the sun's first rays shot out over the mountain, and suddenly the world was ablaze with light.

The sun rose majestically. The great bird stretched out its wings to greet the sun and feel the warmth on its feathers. The farmer was quiet. The friend said, "You belong not to the earth, but to the sky. Fly, Eagle, fly!" He scrambled back to the farmer. All was silent. The eagle's head stretched up, its wings stretched outwards, and its legs leaned forward as its claws clutched the rock.

Then, without really moving, feeling the updraft of a wind more powerful than any man or bird, the great eagle leaned forward and was swept upward higher and higher, lost to sight in the brightness of the rising sun, never again to live among the chickens.



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|                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Passage         | FLY, EAGLE, FLY     |
| Reading Purpose | Literary Experience |

**Item 1: What farmer set out to look for (Example of item at PIRLS Low International Benchmark)**

**Comprehension Process:** Focus on and Retrieve Explicitly Stated Information and Ideas

- What did the farmer set out to look for at the beginning of the story?
  - ☒ A a calf
  - ☐ B herders
  - ☐ C rocky cliffs
  - ☐ D an eagle chick

**Percentage of students earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 89 |
| United States      | 90 |

**Item 2: Where farmer found eagle chick (Example of item at PIRLS High International Benchmark)**

**Comprehension Process:** Focus on and Retrieve Explicitly Stated Information and Ideas

- Where did the farmer find the eagle chick?
  - ☐ A in its nest
  - ☐ B by the riverbed
  - ☒ C on a ledge of rock
  - ☐ D among the reeds

**Percentage of students earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 73 |
| United States      | 75 |

**Item 3: What shows farmer was careful (Example of item at PIRLS Intermediate International Benchmark)**

**Comprehension Process:** Make Straightforward Inferences

- What in the story shows that the farmer was careful with the eagle chick?
  - ☒ A He carried the eagle chick in both hands.
  - ☐ B He brought the eagle chick to his family.
  - ☐ C He put the eagle chick back in its nest.
  - ☐ D He searched the riverbed for the eagle chick.

**Percentage of students earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 64 |
| United States      | 78 |

**Item 4: What farmer did with the eagle chick (Example of item at PIRLS Intermediate International Benchmark)****Comprehension Process:** Focus on and Retrieve Explicitly Stated Information and Ideas

4. What did the farmer do with the eagle chick when he brought it home?

- Ⓐ He taught it to fly.  
 Ⓑ He set it free.  
 Ⓒ He trained it to be a chicken.  
 Ⓓ He made a new nest for it.

**Percentage of students earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 88 |
| United States      | 89 |

**Item 5: Eagle chick behaved like a chicken (Example of item at PIRLS High International Benchmark)****Comprehension Process:** Focus on and Retrieve Explicitly Stated Information and Ideas

5. During the friend's first visit, the eagle chick behaved like a chicken. Give two examples that show this.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Percentage of students earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 56 |
| United States      | 69 |

**Correct Response:**

1. It think like an eagle and walks like a chicken.  
 2. Also it eats like a chicken.

**Item 6: How friend tried making eagle fly (Example of item at PIRLS High International Benchmark)****Comprehension Process:** Make Straightforward Inferences

6. When the farmer's friend first met the eagle, how did he try to make the eagle fly?

- Ⓐ He lifted it above his head.  
 Ⓑ He set it on the ground.  
 Ⓒ He threw it in the air.  
 Ⓓ He brought it to the mountain.

**Percentage of students earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 70 |
| United States      | 74 |

**Item 7: Explanation of friend's words (Example of item at PIRLS High International Benchmark)****Comprehension Process:** Interpret and Integrate Ideas and Information

7. Explain what the farmer's friend meant when he told the eagle, "You belong not to the earth but to the sky."

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**Percentage of students  
earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 42 |
| United States      | 62 |

**Correct Response:**

The eagle spoke to fly but  
not stay at the ground.

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**Item 8: Why farmer roared with laughter (Example of item at PIRLS Advanced International Benchmark)****Comprehension Process:** Interpret and Integrate Ideas and Information

8. Why did the farmer roar with laughter during his friend's first visit?

- Ⓐ The eagle was too heavy to fly.  
 Ⓑ The eagle was difficult to catch.  
 Ⓒ The eagle looked different from the chickens.  
 Ⓓ The eagle proved him right.

**Percentage of students  
earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 46 |
| United States      | 59 |

**Item 9: Eagle taken to the high mountains (Example of item at PIRLS Advanced International Benchmark)****Comprehension Process:** Interpret and Integrate Ideas and Information

9. Why did the farmer's friend take the eagle to the high mountains to make it fly? Give two reasons.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Percentage of students  
earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 17 |
| United States      | 20 |

**Correct Response:**

1. He did it because the sun would  
 make him fly.  
 2. He also did this because the eagle  
 will try to fill the warmth.

**Item 10: Beautiful sky at dawn (Example of item at PIRLS High International Benchmark)****Comprehension Process:** Examine and Evaluate Content, Language, and Textual Elements

10. Find and copy words that tell you how beautiful the sky was at dawn.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Percentage of students  
earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 56 |
| United States      | 67 |

**Correct Response:**

majestic \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Item 11: Why sun rising was important (Example of item at PIRLS High International Benchmark)****Comprehension Process:** Examine and Evaluate Content, Language, and Textual Elements

11. Why was the rising sun important to the story?

- Ⓐ It awakened the eagle's instinct to fly.
- Ⓑ It reigned in the heavens.
- Ⓒ It warmed the eagle's feathers.
- Ⓓ It provided light on the mountain paths.

**Percentage of students  
earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 57 |
| United States      | 73 |

**Item 12: What farmer's friend was like (Example of item at PIRLS Advanced International Benchmark)****Comprehension Process:** Interpret and Integrate Ideas and Information

12. You learn what the farmer's friend was like from the things he did.

Describe what the friend was like and give an example of what he did that shows this.

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**Percentage of students  
earning full-credit**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| International Avg. | 29 |
| United States      | 42 |

**Correct Response:**

The friend tried to convince the farmer that the eagle isn't a chicken. So the friend proved by letting the eagle fly with the sun rising.